

OPHTHALMOLOGY : A Textbook for Diploma Students. By Patrick D. Trevor-Roper. (Pp. 683. 75s.) London : Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books), 1955.

THIS new textbook, which is based on the current teaching and practice of Moorfields Eye Hospital and its academic offspring, the Institute of Ophthalmology in London, will be welcomed by all those whose interest is in acquiring a thorough basic knowledge of the subject. The field to be covered is extensive and the result is that discursive forays and elegant elaborations have been eschewed.

The first quarter of the book, dealing with anatomy and physiology, sets out in sufficient detail and with adequate illustration, these essential preliminaries to a good grasp of ophthalmology. A section on optics follows, in which the refraction of the eye is discussed and the estimation and correction of refractive errors described. This goes into sufficient detail to render the subject intelligible without elaborate mathematics.

The clinician will find the latter half of the volume of great interest. This comprises two sections—Diseases of the Outer Eye and Diseases of the Inner Eye. It is here that the pleasing format and layout of the volume is particularly enhanced by the excellence of the illustrations, of which there are over four hundred and fifty in the book. The large majority are original drawings or photographs, of which nearly all have been prepared by the Department of Illustration at the Institute of Ophthalmology. Both photographs and drawings are of the first-rate quality we are accustomed to expect from the Institute.

The text of these two sections includes descriptions of all the commonly occurring eye diseases, including many which have been recently elucidated. Among these are retrolental fibroplasia, toxoplasmosis, sarcoidosis and the retinopathies. Under the latter heading the latest views on diabetic retinopathy and its relation to Kimmelstiel and Wilson's disease are described.

There is a valuable chapter on the treatment of external diseases which expresses in concise form the present views on therapeutics. The author recommends the anti-fungal drug sodium propionate (10 per cent. drops or ointment) as the best general anti-infective agent apart from the antibiotics.

This book is recommended as an adequate fulfilment of what it claims to be—a textbook for the student preparing for the Diploma in Ophthalmology. Refinements must be sought in larger compilations, but there must be few medical men, whether in general or ophthalmic practice, who would not find interest or information of value in the pages of this new and up-to-date textbook.

J. A. C.

MANAGEMENT OF LIFE-THREATENING POLIOMYELITIS. Copenhagen, 1952-56. Edited by H. C. A. Lassen, M.D. (Pp. xi + 179; figs. 55. 22s. 6d.) Edinburgh and London : E. & S. Livingstone, 1956.

DURING the last four months of 1952 the Blegdam Hospital in Copenhagen received 2,241 patients with poliomyelitis from the municipality with a population of 1.2 million. At the height of the epidemic up to fifty patients with the disease were admitted daily. At the beginning of the outbreak the hospital had only one cabinet and six cuirass respirators and improvisation of respiratory aids involved recruitment of nearly a thousand medical students for manual respiration with rudimentary apparatus. The triumph of Professor Lassen and his colleagues over terrifying difficulties is now history.

This book is a record of the experiences of the team during and since the outbreak. It embraces comprehensive observations by clinicians, metabolic physicians, laryngologists and physiotherapists, and contains a good summary of autopsy findings in one hundred and fifteen cases. It is inspiring and monumental as a record of experience with poliomyelitis not to be envied, but it is not to be regarded as a textbook treatise on the disease. Much progress in mechanical respiration was inspired by the work done in Copenhagen and for this alone many must be grateful.

The book is well produced and figures and tables are adequate and distinct. It is worthy of a place in the history of poliomyelitis.

F. F. K.